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Hon. Liam O'Grady
U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia
Albert V. Bryan U.S. Courthouse
401 Courthouse Square
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Dear Judge O'Grady

Thank you for considering this letter, which I submit on behalf of Matthew Kekoa LumHo. In 20 years of legal practice and five years of ministry, I have written a great many letters, briefs and sermons. This letter, I truly believe, is among the most important that I have crafted. As such, the opportunity to provide this and your willingness to consider it means a great deal to me.

There are a great many reasons why I believe your extension of mercy to Kekoa is highly warranted in this matter. These include that he is a wonderful husband and father, whom his family deeply depends on for provision, leadership and guidance. In my ministry work, I have seen too many children and single mothers struggle and suffer due to the absence of a father. This has convicted me all the more that the single-most important role I have in life is to be a husband and father who is present, loving and constant. Though this is equally true of Kekoa, and I think the most important reason for extending him mercy and grace, I also expect that you fully appreciate that. As such, I want to focus on another basis on which I respectfully request that you grant him leniency in his sentencing.

I have known Kekoa since 2014, when he and Delilah joined our life group at church. At that time, I was pursuing my seminary degree, and in the process of transitioning from a career in law to becoming a pastor. Though Kekoa did not know the Lord when we first met, it was shortly after that he and Delilah came to trust in Him. Even before that moment, however, I could tell Kekoa had a special heart – that he was inclined towards the poor and disenfranchised in our world. That is why I sought him out when I took the position of Missions and Outreach Pastor at our church, Burke Community Church, in Burke, Va.

As the Missions and Outreach Pastor, I oversee a significant ministry that provides support and care for people both in our northern Virginia community and around the world. I wear another

hat, however, in that my wife Amy and I started a ministry for orphaned and vulnerable children in rural South Africa called 25:40 (from Mt. 25:40). Over the years, Kekoa has provided support to both of these ministry areas, including serving on a team that helped us with the planning of a children's home in South Africa's Eastern Cape. But what I would like to focus on here is the role he has played in assisting me with a major project we are undertaking in our own community.

Burke Community Church recently opened a Care and Counseling Center, a project that was envisioned by our elders five years ago. I was given responsibility to oversee the design and start-up of the care side of the center, the purpose of which is to provide services and resources to the poor in our area. It was a monumental task in and of itself. When combined with all of my other responsibilities, it became overwhelming. I knew I needed help, and Kekoa was one of the first people I turned to. He is trustworthy and full of integrity, but beyond those essential characteristics, Kekoa also has very strong organizational skills. Where I had a vision, he was able to help me map out a plan for meeting that vision. So I asked him to join an operating committee for the Center, which he readily agreed to. He has been volunteering on this project ever since.

Kekoa has been a tremendous asset to the planning and start-up process of the Care Center. He has assisted me in developing a strategy and operational plan that will allow us to meet and serve people where they are. We intend to provide language-building skills, tutoring, financial counseling, employment counseling and assistance, and mental-health counseling to people in low-income communities in our area. We also intend to develop a program to assist recently released inmates in re-entering society, and to minister to the families of those currently incarcerated. We firmly believe in this specific focus because of the critical need to break the cycles that perpetuate these negative lifestyles. In some respects, my hope is that we would make your job less demanding.

As I mentioned, Kekoa has been voluntarily assisting me with the ongoing development and implementation of this ministry. While we have come a long way, we still have a long way to go. There remain substantial elements of the Center that need to be planned and initiated, and he has been integral to those efforts. These include developing operational plans for the various ministry areas, setting up mobile computer labs, and establishing volunteer recruitment and training programs. Kekoa has been assisting in the planning in all of these areas on a voluntary basis. It is my deep desire that he would be able to continue helping me with all of this work, even as he serves his sentence. He has the heart and the skill set (and now possibly even more time) to really assist in building out this vital asset to our collectively community.

It is for these reasons that I respectfully add to the appeals already before you my humble request that Kekoa be spared incarceration, and rather be given home confinement. While there would be no feasible way for him to assist us from jail, there is a tremendous amount of very beneficial work he could do from his home. I have spoken with others in our leadership, all of whom think very highly of Kekoa. If the Court were to consider an alternative to incarceration, which might include community service, we stand ready to assist in the oversight of that to extent helpful and appropriate.

Judge O'Grady, I truly believe we have in this a tremendous opportunity for both redemption and a very positive impact on our community. By your extension of grace and mercy, we truly can turn an unfortunate situation into a lasting good. And I believe we can prevent others from a life of crime and punishment in the process. I hope you will strongly consider this request. Thank you again for taking the time to read my letter, and thank you for your lifetime of service. I wish you the best for the remainder of your impressive and honorable career.

Best Regards,

Alec Zacaroli

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